

## VOLUNTEER SERVICE, IOWA COMMISSION ON[817]

### Notice of Intended Action

Twenty-five interested persons, a governmental subdivision, an agency or association of 25 or more persons may demand an oral presentation hereon as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.4(1)“b.”

Notice is also given to the public that the Administrative Rules Review Committee may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this proposed action under section 17A.8(6) at a regular or special meeting where the public or interested persons may be heard.

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code section 17A.3 and chapter 15H, the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service gives Notice of Intended Action to adopt amendments to Chapter 8, “Iowa Youth Mentoring Program Certification,” Iowa Administrative Code.

The current rules establish procedures for the certification of youth mentoring programs to ensure that certifications are handled in a fair and orderly manner. The proposed amendments provide clarification on the certification process and bring the rules up to date.

Public comments concerning the proposed amendments will be accepted until 4:30 p.m. on February 18, 2011. Interested persons may submit written or oral comments by contacting Adam Lounsbury, Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, 200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309; telephone (515)725-3099; or E-mail [Adam.Lounsbury@iowa.gov](mailto:Adam.Lounsbury@iowa.gov).

The Commission will hold a public hearing on Friday, February 18, 2011, from 1 to 2 p.m. to receive comments on these amendments. The public hearing will be held in the Iowa Tourism Room, Iowa Department of Economic Development, 200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa.

These amendments are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 15H.

The following amendments are proposed.

ITEM 1. Amend **817—Chapter 8**, introductory paragraph, as follows:

~~One of the purposes~~ The purpose of the Iowa mentoring partnership (IMP) is to certify mentoring programs that meet ~~those certification~~ standards outlined in the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™, published by the National Mentoring Partnership, that have been established for youth mentoring programs ~~outlined in this chapter~~. The Iowa mentoring partnership ~~assists with the development and support of a network of mentoring providers and also provides training, resources and support services to certified local mentoring programs and programs with a conditional certification.~~ The In partnership with certified programs, the Iowa mentoring partnership seeks strives to increase the capacity of these mentoring programs, deliver resources, raise statewide awareness of the positive benefits of mentoring children and youth, and enhance the quality of mentoring relationships in Iowa.

ITEM 2. Amend rule 817—8.1(15H) as follows:

#### **817—8.1(15H) Definitions.**

“*Certification*” means the process ~~which identifies~~ for identifying youth mentoring programs as meeting the criteria for effective practice ~~to be~~ in order to become eligible for financial and technical assistance.

“*Commission*” means the Iowa commission on volunteer service.

“*Conditional certification*” means a temporary certification identifying a youth mentoring program before the program is fully operational in order for the program to apply for financial and technical assistance.

“*Mentoring certification application*” means the application, which was developed by the Iowa mentoring partnership and Iowa commission on volunteer service, and which can be adopted by all agencies and departments of state government to determine an applicant’s designation as a certified mentoring program. The application contains information ~~which shall that can~~ be used to determine an applicant’s designation as a certified mentoring program ~~for participation in the Iowa mentoring partnership.~~

*“Mentoring program” or “youth mentoring program” means a program that provides older mentors to youth, provided that the program meets all of the following requirements: ~~A mentoring program must meet all of the following requirements:~~*

- 1. ~~Be~~ The program is located in this state;*
- 2. ~~Be~~ The program is operated as a public or private not-for-profit entity, part of a school or area education agency, or part of a faith-based community;*
- 3. ~~Serve youth aged~~ Youth served by the program are between the ages of 5 to and 23;*
- 4. ~~Appropriately screen mentors, requiring a minimum of two hours of orientation and training prior to serving in a mentoring capacity;~~*
- 5. ~~Require mentors and youth to meet for a minimum of one hour per week over the course of a school or calendar year;~~*
- 6. ~~Require mentors and youth in an E-mentoring program to communicate electronically, at least once per week, over the course of a school or calendar year.~~*

ITEM 3. Amend rule 817—8.2(15H) as follows:

**817—8.2(15H) Certification.** ~~The~~ Based on each mentoring program’s self-assessment (completed via the mentoring certification application), the commission is responsible for ascertaining that whether a youth mentoring program is qualified to be designated as a certified mentoring program.

**8.2(1) Full certification.** Before a mentoring program can participate in the Iowa mentoring partnership, it must be certified by the commission.

*a.* A review team shall review applications from youth mentoring programs to determine whether the mentoring programs are eligible to participate in the ~~Iowa mentoring partnership program.~~

*b.* Full certification means the commission has determined that the youth mentoring program has met the established standards.

*c.* Applications for mentoring program certification are available from the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, 200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309, ~~or the Iowa Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319~~ and the Iowa mentoring partnership’s Web site ([www.iowamentoring.org](http://www.iowamentoring.org)).

*d.* Applicants shall receive written notification of the commission’s decision.

*e.* To remain in good standing as a program with full certification, mentoring programs must verify continued certification by submitting required reports.

**8.2(2) Conditional certification.** Some mentoring programs are temporarily certified before the program becomes fully operational or before the program has met the standards for full certification.

*a.* No change.

*b.* The mentoring program name will not be included on the ~~IMP~~ Iowa mentoring partnership Web site, nor will the program be referred potential mentors, until the mentoring program has been fully certified. The Web site of the Iowa mentoring partnership is [www.iowamentoring.org](http://www.iowamentoring.org).

*c. and d.* No change.

**8.2(3) Recertification.** Certified youth mentoring programs shall submit verification of continued eligibility to the commission at least every two years.

*a.* The form for recertification shall be provided by the commission.

*b.* Other documents and regular reporting will be requested throughout the certification period to verify the continuing eligibility of the mentoring program.

**8.2(4)** No change.

**8.2(5) Reapplication.** A mentoring program may reapply upon proof of compliance with Iowa youth mentoring program certification standards. Any program that is denied certification or decertified for any reason bears the burden of proving that all deficiencies previously cited have been corrected. Corrections shall be in accordance with requirements of the Iowa mentoring partnership. Applications may be requested from the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, 200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309, ~~or the Iowa Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319~~ mentoring partnership’s Web site ([www.iowamentoring.org](http://www.iowamentoring.org)).

**8.2(6) Notification.** The commission shall be notified within 30 days following a change in staff of the mentoring program director or an authorized representative of the certified mentoring program.

ITEM 4. Amend rule 817—8.3(15H) as follows:

**817—8.3(15H) Description of application.** The IMP Iowa mentoring partnership application requires information about individuals who manage and administer the local mentoring program. ~~Names, current addresses, federal identification number, and names of board and committee members must be included. Documents which establish nonprofit status may be required.~~

**8.3(1)** Specific questions are included on the application regarding mentoring program operations, training, number of mentors and mentees, structure of the program, and other information to determine whether the program meets the certification standards established in ~~rule~~ rules 817—8.4(15H) and 817—8.5(15H).

**8.3(2)** Information contained in the application may be reviewed by the applicant upon request to the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service, 200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309. Material to be added to a file may be sent to the commission at the above address.

ITEM 5. Amend rule 817—8.4(15H) as follows:

**817—8.4(15H) Certification standards** ~~Basis for certification standards.~~ The commission has established standards to certify youth mentoring programs. These standards ~~are intended to indicate whether programs are operating under the quality policies and procedures established by a national panel of mentoring program experts, researchers and others~~ are based on the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™, published by the National Mentoring Partnership. These elements are based on the work of a panel of experts convened by the National Mentoring Partnership to produce a set of rigorous mentoring guidelines, providing the gold standard for quality mentoring for more than a decade.

**8.4(1) Statement of purpose.** The mentoring program should have a statement of purpose and long-range plan that include:

*a. to d.* No change.

~~*e.* Goals, objectives, and time lines for all aspects of the plan.~~

~~*f. e.* Funding and resource development plan.~~

**8.4(2) Recruitment plan.** The mentoring program shall have recruitment plans for both mentors and participants that include:

*a. to d.* No change.

~~*e.* A philosophy consistent with the program's statement of purpose and long-range plan.~~

~~*f. e.* A goal of serving at least 15 12 youth, computed as an average of the number of youth served over the preceding three program years.~~

**8.4(3) Orientation.** The mentoring program shall have an orientation for mentors and mentees that includes:

*a. to g.* No change.

**8.4(4) Eligibility.** The mentoring program shall have eligibility screening for mentors and participants that includes:

~~*a.* A written application process and review process.~~

*b.* A face-to-face interview and, for community-based programs, a home visit.

*c.* Reference checks for mentors, which may include character references, a child abuse registry check, a driving record check, and a criminal record check ~~where~~ as legally permissible.

*d. and e.* No change.

**8.4(5) Training curriculum.** The mentoring program shall have a readiness and training curriculum for all mentors and participants that includes:

*a. to c.* No change.

*d.* Cultural/heritage sensitivity and appreciation training.

*e. to k.* No change.

**8.4(6) *Matching strategy.*** The mentoring program should have a matching strategy that includes:

~~a. A link with the program's statement of purpose.~~

~~b. a. A commitment to consistency.~~

~~c. b. A grounding in the program's eligibility criteria.~~

~~d. A rationale for the selection of a particular matching strategy from the wide range of available models.~~

~~e. c. Appropriate criteria for matches, including some or all of the following: gender, age, language requirements, availability, needs, interests, preferences of volunteer and participant, life experience, and temperament.~~

~~f. A signed statement of understanding that both parties agree to the conditions of the match and the mentoring relationship.~~

~~g. Prematch social activities between mentor and participant pools.~~

~~h. d. Team-building activities to reduce the anxiety of Staff assistance with the first meeting.~~

**8.4(7) *Monitoring process.*** The mentoring program should have a monitoring process that includes:

a. to e. No change.

**8.4(8) *Mentor support and recognition.*** The mentoring program should have a support, recognition, and retention component that includes:

~~a. A formal kick-off event.~~

~~b. a. Ongoing peer support groups for volunteers, participants, and others.~~

~~c. b. Ongoing training and development.~~

~~d. c. Relevant discussion of issues and dissemination of information.~~

~~e. Networking with appropriate organizations.~~

~~f. Social gatherings of different groups as needed.~~

~~g. d. Annual Regular mentor recognition and appreciation event.~~

~~h. Newsletters or other mailings to participants, mentors, supporters, and funders.~~

**8.4(9) *Closure.*** The mentoring program should have closure steps that include:

a. Private and confidential exit interviews regarding the mentoring relationship between:

(1) Participant and staff;

(2) Mentor and staff; and

(3) ~~Mentor and participant without staff~~ Program staff and teachers or parents or both, as appropriate.

b. and c. No change.

**8.4(10) *Evaluation.*** The mentoring program should have an evaluation process based on:

a. to c. No change.

**8.4(11) *Additional certification standards.*** The commission also utilizes the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™, published by the National Mentoring Partnership, to determine the primary areas of review for mentoring program certification. These areas are intended to indicate whether programs are operating under the quality policies and procedures established by a national panel of mentoring program experts, researchers and others.

a. *History of operation.* Mentoring programs shall have an established history of operation of two years (24 months). Programs that have been operating less than 24 months may be granted full certification but will be required to provide quarterly updates to the Iowa mentoring partnership.

b. *Length of match.* Mentoring programs shall meet minimum requirements for length of match based on program type.

(1) Community-based programs, including E-mentoring programs, shall establish an initial commitment of one year with new or potential mentors.

(2) School-based programs, including E-mentoring programs, shall establish an initial commitment of nine months with new or potential mentors.

c. *Minimum monthly contact.* Mentoring programs shall meet minimum requirements for monthly contact based on program type.

(1) Matches in community-based programs shall meet for a minimum of four hours per month with a consistent schedule.

(2) School-based programs shall meet for a minimum of two hours per month with a consistent schedule.

(3) E-mentoring programs shall have contact via E-mail a minimum of once per week.

d. Background checks. Mentoring programs shall meet minimum requirements for checking the background of mentor applicants.

(1) Criminal background and sex offender registry checks for mentors over the age of 18.

(2) Reference checks for mentors under the age of 18.

e. Pre-match mentor training. Mentoring programs shall meet minimum requirements for training of mentors. At least two hours of pre-match training and preparation activities shall be provided to new mentors.

ITEM 6. Amend rule 817—8.5(15H) as follows:

**817—8.5(15H) Special consideration.** In addition to the standards ~~listed above~~ set forth in rule 817—8.4(15H), the commission may give consideration to other factors to determine certification status in order to ensure that only high-quality youth mentoring programs are certified.

**8.5(1) On-site audits.** At the discretion of the commission, on-site audits may be conducted to determine certification.

**8.5(2) Reporting.** Programs that fail to submit required documentation are at risk of decertification and may be deemed ineligible to receive the benefits of certification, including complimentary training registration and inclusion on the Iowa mentoring partnership Web site.

ITEM 7. Amend rule 817—8.6(15H), introductory paragraph, as follows:

**817—8.6(15H) Decertification.** A youth mentoring program shall be decertified by the commission if it is determined that the program no longer meets the certification standards identified herein for a high-quality mentoring program, ~~or if program personnel cannot be contacted by the commission,~~ if the program fails to provide documents requested by the commission or if the program fails to complete the required Iowa mentoring partnership quarterly reports.